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THE
RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION,

AS SET FORTH IN THE

Formularies of the Westminster Divines,

AND OF THE

CHURCHES OF HOLLAND.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where
is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jer. vi. 16.

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ART. I. *Cause of Apostacy.*

[Continued from page 18.]

"*Without natural affection.*" Such an affection as should be in parents to their children, and in children to their parents. This charge rests on the same persons who are disobedient to their parents, for these two charges cannot be separate; and also on those parents who are "lovers of their own selves," "proud, boasters, covetous," &c. These dispositions are at variance with true natural affection, and consequently, where they have the ascendancy, natural affections can scarcely have any place. It is affecting to see parents carrying their authority up to the limits affixed by the laws of the land, and taking all the service and profit off their children which they may, until they are twenty-one years of age; and next, on the other side, to see the children the very next day turning round and claiming, with the same legal tone, remuneration for the least further service,—and it is a thing to be often seen. No doubt what is plead for is true—that this is just: so it would be, also, between a master and a servant or apprentice; but where is the *natural affection* of it? The stork, whose name is borrowed from this Greek word, is said *never* to leave its parents, but to feed and protect them to the last. How rarely is this the case among the present generation of human beings! It is much more common for children to avail themselves of their legal rights, like the Jewish youths of old, who took advantage of the popularity of the tradition, and said, "*it is Corban.*"

Again: on the other hand, if to be cold and careless about children's eternal salvation, and to be all earnestness and concern about their worldly advantage, indicates a want of natural affection in parents, how many parents want it! What multitudes of parents making a profession of religion, are content—not only content, but very desirous, to procure that situation for their children, which promises fairest to make them wealthy, or to elevate them to places of honor or trust, though surrounded with temptations to become profane and wicked, and neglect and despise all those things which belong to their eternal peace. If he or she,

as the case may be, that is proposed for a new connection, have only money or property in hand or in prospect, that alone weighs down every consideration of spiritual things in the minds of parents.

"*Truce breakers.*" A truce is a treaty or an agreement, made and ratified in the most solemn manner, pledging for its fulfilment all their interest in a future world. All engagements under oath and solemn vows may be considered as coming within the meaning of the term. If a man is inducted into office by oath, it is equivalent to a truce, or solemn engagement to fulfil the duties of it. And is not the breach of such engagements come to a most appalling height? When a man or woman, at their entering on a profession of religion, promises, before a Session constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, to walk according to it, it is surely a very solemn engagement: so it is when parents, in receiving baptism for their children, promise to bring them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Such, also, are the vows of ordination to the eldership or the ministry. But how are these engagements kept by the generality? or rather with how many aggravations are they broken and cast by? Are they any thing more with vast multitudes than mere ceremony, made without previous consideration or serious purpose, and forgotten and disregarded on the same day? They are *dead letters* in the history of the man. Not a few this day are, with deliberation and purpose, avowedly acting in plain contradiction to their most solemn vows; advocating measures which they were sworn to oppose; preaching doctrines which they had solemnly denounced. I appeal here to many who yet know and understand these things, if there are not whole societies of professors, yea, nations, most deeply involved in covenant violations. And this matter is of so old a date that it has long since dropped out of the mind, and so common that it is nothing thought of. If you speak seriously of it, it will be held in derision, or, to say the least, it is a dead language, which they have long since ceased to understand.

Among these truce breakers, there are no doubt many who are so from ignorance and carelessness, not understanding what they are doing, nor anxious to inquire after it. But there are others to whom this charity cannot be extended. They have knowledge sufficient to understand their solemn vows, and "speak lies in hypocrisy;" for it was never their serious, deliberate purpose at all to endeavor to walk up to them. It was only because there was no other way of obtaining the external privileges or office which, for some reason or other, they wished to enjoy. There are many that become truce breakers because (strange to tell) they think they would be uncharitable and bigotted towards those who differ from them if they would strictly adhere to their vows! Their charity bids God-speed to every one that goes by. They must hear and commune with Christians of every name, and applaud the doctrine which they do not believe. The preacher that is sprung out of this sort cautiously hides in his bosom the peculiarities of that system of truth to which he gave his solemn pledge at license or ordination, if the audience, or a part of it, disapprove of them, and he makes as though he would be understood to hold the opposite doctrine; and he endeavors, upon this same plan, to "become all things to all men." These men would make you believe that they could take you into their heart for very love. They will pour encomium upon yourself and your way of faith and worship, till you are out of all countenance. The difference between them and you, if we believe them, is exceedingly small; yet it is all "lies in hypocrisy," in the hope of proselyting you.

But, reader, can the men who trifle after this sort with their most solemn pledges to God and man—preaching one doctrine to-day, and endeavoring with all their ability to be thought friendly to its opposite to-

morrow—worshiping in one way at home, and for mere compliment's sake approving of another abroad,—can they seriously believe that the Bible is the word of God at all? I think they cannot; and were it not that the church stands on a rock, against which hell will never prevail, it would make me tremble to think what numbers of *Deists* are this day pretending to be her ministers, elders and people.

“*False accusers.*” Diaboloi or devils, because false accusers act so much in the character of the devil, who is called “the Accuser of the brethren, which accuses them before God day and night.” (Rev. xii. 10.) This vice flourishes, and has a numerous and increasing class of practisers: go to an election, and you must both see and hear them. Read the public papers, and you will frequently meet whole columns of deliberate and digested slander. Place “the way of truth” before the religious public, and by the generality of those who condescend to notice it at all, it will be “evil spoken of.” It is called *cold orthodoxy*, and the few people who still adhere to it are loaded with opprobrious epithets. Bring to remembrance the martyrs and reformers by whose means we enjoy so many privileges, and it is a thousand to one if the tribute paid to their memory be not that “*they were fools.*” This is little better than to call them *heretics*, which their mortal enemy at Rome calls them, from whom neither mercy or truth is ever more to be expected. Such as yet adhere to Reformation principles are accused of being “behind the spirit of the age”—“only a few removes from barbarism”—“unfriendly to the spread of the gospel in the world”—“a hindrance in the way of harmony among the christian denominations”—“uncharitable and bigoted.” These are grave accusations, and in so far as they lie against the *principles* of their profession, they are *false*.

“*Incontinent.*” It has been thought by some commentators that this whole passage was intended by the inspired apostle as a prophetic description of characters that were after to appear in the ranks of the great Popish apostacy; and that they would, among many other vices, be *incontinent*. And that there have been and still are many such among them, in all orders, from the Pope himself to the lowest of his creatures, is well known to all that are acquainted with their true history, their vows of perpetual celibacy, and higher claims to chastity notwithstanding. And I admit that that apostacy has brought, and still brings forth, all the characters in this passage by thousands, and that it has a respect to them.

But if we suppose that there are none to be found in any other connection answering this description, or if we suppose that an apostacy from the Reformation cannot bring them forth to as great maturity, we are grossly mistaken. That there are many expressions of character, in dress, language and amusements, far removed from the spirit of chastity, to be seen in Protestant communities; and that there are multitudes of lewd men and women in our cities, towns and villages, and places of public resort, is undeniable. Whence are they? and where are they baptised? and who are their parents?—Are they *all* within the Romish communion?—*all* the supporters of the theatre, masquerade and ball room, and the numerous fashionable excitements to unclean passions? It is not so. There is a large proportion of them Protestants by name, and not a few of them by profession. And it is progressive apostacy from Protestant faith and practice, that has generated and brought forth such characters.

“*Fierce.*” Those who have this as their predominant trait are easily offended, and they carry it high. Anger quickly rises to passion, and passion to rage, which vents itself in loud and clamorous speeches and threatenings, and frequently in deeds of vengeance. I know not to what

else to ascribe the numerous quarrels and outbreakings that frequently happen among us; the many law suits; the horrid cruelty of husbands to wives; the murders, duels and suicides which are continually reported in the public journals.

"*Despisers of those that are good*"—that are conscientious in their profession—observing the Sabbath in a spiritual manner—refraining from carnal conversation, and endeavoring to be spiritual in all their deportment. Those that are good are humble, self-denied, patient, forgiving, returning good for evil. They study to bring to pass in practice the whole of their profession; they study to be stronger in the word; they bewail their corruptions; they thirst after likeness to God; his declarative glory is their highest aim; gratitude and love is their strongest principle. There are few, very few of such people now among us, yet there are some; and it is not easy to know how many or where they are.—They lie hid and concealed; and the reason is, because they are any thing but popular characters: they are *despised* by the atheist, the wicked and profane—despised by the gay and fashionable, the ignorant, the unthinking: they are despised by all such as hate sound doctrine—as make light of consistency in a profession—as are full of the modern charity, and its *interminable scheming*: yea, they are despised by their near neighbors. Sometimes this despising of them may stop with simply overlooking them, or, at most, undervaluing them; but it frequently goes further, and breaks forth in terms of opprobrium, ridicule and contempt.

"*Traitors.*" The term traitor is applied to Judas, because he betrayed his master into the hands of his enemies, under the character of a disciple, and with the pretence of friendship. But the same thing may be still done. There is such a thing as crucifying Christ afresh, and so there is of betraying him afresh. Christ identifies himself with his church and his truth; and whoever betrays them, betrays him—they are *traitors*, who ever comes into a church, professing to espouse her profession, and then lays her and it open to the attack of enemies, whether in a private or public way, they are *traitors*.

When the officers of the church admit *known* enemies into her fellowship, or connive at their remaining in it; when ministers, notwithstanding their solemn vows to their profession, give help and countenance to those who are opposed to it; when ministers and people, under pretence of union or of extending the sphere of their principles, give up the peculiar truths for which they contend; and when, along with these, the property or money received in trust, to be expended in support of these peculiarities, are also given up, I would consider it as in effect betraying Christ, with more or less aggravation. And if this be betraying, surely we have enough of it. Those who will be unfaithful in these things, want nothing but a favorable opportunity and a little stronger temptation, to go farther. There is treachery in the heart, which the love of truth has not power to overawe. Such men are just as fit to betray private interest and the nation's prosperity, as to do what they do. When we look back on the conduct of ministers and people for these fifty or sixty years, and consider how general and popular this same conduct has become, we have great reason to be afraid that the great and glorious Reformation is near being given into the hands of its mortal enemies, the Roman Catholics.

"*Heady.*" This term is of the same import with rash, hasty, precipitate. When men have so strong a confidence in their own judgment as to think reflection superfluous, even before the most important steps, and without hesitation proceed upon first impressions and first views, they may be called *heady*. How many things of the greatest weight are done

in this way? and how many are there that do them? This precipitancy may be seen in every department of life.

A single thought is enough to decide on a marriage connection which is likely to affect our social, moral and religious habits, to the end of life. A first impression of a new business or a new country often times cuts a man loose from all opportunity of waiting on his religious profession, and draws him into the midst of snares and temptations to become hardened, profane and wicked. The first view of some new theory in theological metaphysics, or of some new mode of doing God service in the church, is sufficient to call all the powers of the individual into action, and by his spark, a hundred are set on fire, and by the hundred, the thousand, and by the thousand, the million, and in a few weeks or months, changes will be introduced in the religious community that would have cost our fathers many years. This is called the mighty spirit of the age, and the march of mind, leaving our fathers in the distance, when it ought to be called rashness. The rapidity and the greatness of the things done, act like showers to the roots of vanity, pride, and self-righteousness, in the growing strength of which, *children* open their mouths to despise *men of renown*.

The next thing in the verse grows out of this, viz: "*high-minded.*"—It signifies here to be puffed up with pride, to be elated. The rapidity with which the people of this age are now accustomed to do great things, (after their kind,) is an excellent means to produce this effect on their minds, and answers well to the sense of the original, primitive word, which signifies *smoke*; for a great deal of what is done by the rash and heady is little else but smoke. Its first appearance looks prodigious: it overspreads and darkens the whole heavens, and we are tempted to think the world is on fire with zeal: but after a few years, it is all blown away. Still it has this effect, to elate and puff up the mind; and this has grown to such excess among us, that men will not scarcely stoop to move in the common way of doing any thing, or if they do it, it sinks in their esteem below its worth, on that account. Hence it comes to pass that plain, sober life is despised by multitudes, and has gone into disuse. They are never satisfied unless they are doing something extraordinary, and without blushing for their own vanity and ostentation, claim for it that name, to the disparagement of others.

"*Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,*" or rather than lovers of God. If a neutral person were to inspect them, in order to find out who they were, he would perceive, indeed, that they *professed* to love God, but their life and manners would deny that, and make it manifest that they were lovers of pleasures. It is hard to say *what* pleasures, for there are many pursued, and therefore are expressed by the plural—many kinds, degrees and times of pleasures. And they are so often at them, that one looking on would say almost all the time. It is their trade, their calling—it is their meat, their drink, their element. Some pleasures are pursued more than others, and some in a more open, public manner than others. The whole world knows to what extent the *pleasures* of drinking to drunkenness have been pursued, till of late that it has been made in some degree unfashionable. The pleasures of dressing the body have been and still are pursued with unabating passion.—The pleasures of costly and splendid buildings, public and private, costly and stylish furniture, and sumptuous tables, abound. Pleasure parties have become exceedingly frequent. Night assemblings, balls and theatres are to be met with even in remote and obscure country places. There is another pleasure which I had almost forgotten, not less generally pursued, nor less opposite to the love of God: it is *novel reading*,—and all

these by people descended of Protestant parents and professors—themselves baptised—many of them professors, and not a few pretending to rank with the foremost. What a contrast with the style of life in better times! the plainness, the simplicity, self-denial, sobriety and seriousness of our reforming ancestors! The gold has become dim; the crown has fallen from our head. Woe unto us, for we have sinned a grievous sin!

[To be continued.]

ART. II. *The Love of the Holy Spirit, displayed in our Salvation.*

(Continued from page 10.)

We now proceed to contemplate *how* the Holy Spirit displays *his* love *distinctly*, with regard to our salvation. And as we have no rule but the Scriptures, we must begin and proceed, according to the order, extent and manner, in which he himself hath revealed it. *There*, we are taught that he hath done it "at sundry times," and in "divers manners." That we may present this delightful subject as plainly, and concisely as we can, we shall illustrate it under two general heads:

First, we shall contemplate how the Holy Spirit displayed his love to the person of the Son himself, who purchased our salvation. And,

Secondly, how he displays it to his people, by applying to them this salvation. The first makes way for the second. And the second is the completion of the former. Of each in order.

First, how did the Holy Spirit display his love to the person of Christ himself? The Scriptures reveal to us the following particulars:

1. The Spirit inspired the prophets to give warnings of him, before he came into the world. Though Christ was only manifested in these last times, yet he was "verily fore-ordained before the foundation of the world unto our glory." And, the Apostle tells the Jews, this was the main subject, of which, God had spoken by all his holy prophets since the world began;" "yea," saith he "all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise spoken of these days." It was their principal business to tell mankind that "in the fulness of time, God would send forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." So again, "of this salvation the prophets have enquired diligently, who prophesied of the grace of God that should come unto you." Searching what, and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, that was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." And here, it is proper to observe, that though the revelation was not so very clear, as under the gospel, yet, it was full, and particular. Christ was made known in the early ages of the world, in the whole compass of his glorious character, and in all the branches of his wonderful undertaking. Isaiah described his person, as "the child born, the son given, the mighty God," and "Immanuel." Moses said, "a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me. David saith, "the Lord swear and will not repent, thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek." And, "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath unto him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, God would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, nor did his flesh see corruption." Daniel told the time, and Micah

the place of his birth. Isaiah is so particular, as to describe the manner, the severity, and end of his sufferings. "He was numbered with transgressors; it pleased the Lord to bruise him. For the transgression of my people was he stricken." Zechariah speaks of "the blood of the covenant." In fine, Malachi, the last of the prophets, as it were, ushered him into the world, with his fore-runner. "BEHOLD I will send my Messenger," (i. e. John the Baptist,) "and he shall prepare the way before me: and the LORD, (i. e. Christ,) whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come saith the LORD of hosts." And, it is beautiful to observe, that when the Spirit of prophecy revived, the songs that were sung about the time of his birth, struck back to the original promises. Thus saith the Virgin, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

Zechariah joined in the same note, at the circumcision of his child. He "was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people: And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David: As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

2. The Holy Spirit displayed his love and power to the Son, by forming, and purifying his human nature, which was absolutely necessary for accomplishing the work he came upon. "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Wherefore, the angel said unto Mary, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over shadow thee; therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And in another place, we read, "Before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." And again, "that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost." Language never used before, since the creation of the world, and never to be used again, upon any like occasion. And as the doctrine contained in it can never be comprehended, so the language ought never to be changed. This is that, which God would distinguish to the wonder of all ages. "Behold, a woman shall encompass," (i. e. by conception,) "a man." And again, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." If we take an evangelist as an interpreter of a prophet, all this was fulfilled in Christ. Matt. i. 21, 22. What an amazing display of condescension, of love and power in the Holy Ghost, was this! "So the whole essence of Christ's human nature was created in the same instant. Thus far the Scriptures go before us, and herein it is necessary to assert the forming of the soul and body of Christ by the Holy Ghost. The curious enquiries of School men, and others, are to be left unto themselves, or rather condemned in them. For what was farther in this *miraculous operation* of the Holy Ghost, seems purposely to be hid from us, in that expression, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Under the secret, glorious cover thereof, we may learn to adore that *holy work* here, which we hope to rejoice in, and bless God for, unto eternity."*

3. The Holy Spirit displayed his love to Christ, very soon after his birth, by bearing testimony that he was the promised Messiah. It was revealed unto Simeon by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death,

* Dr. Owen on the Spirit, Book ii. Chap. 3. Sec. xiii.

before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Yea, it is said, "He came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," (i. e. thy Saviour.) And that, at the mouth of two witnesses every thing might be established, "Anna the prophetess coming in, that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." In fine, John must have been acquainted with Jesus, in his youth, their Mother's being so near relations. He must, doubtless, have heard of the strange things that took place at his own and the birth of Jesus Christ. Though he continued in the deserts, he could not have been ignorant of these things; but he professeth that the main testimony was given by the Holy Ghost: "I knew him not," saith he; that is, not fully, not free of all scruple; "but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him, the same is he that shall baptize with the Holy Ghost; and I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." This leads us to observe,

4. The Holy Spirit displayed his love to the Son at his baptism by giving him qualifications for discharging all the offices to which he was appointed. "He whom God sent speaks the words of God, for God gives not the Spirit by measure unto him." Thus we read that "When Jesus was baptised, and prayed, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Thus Christ speaks of his ministerial qualifications: "The Spirit of the Lord," saith he, "is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel." In the same manner he performed his miracles. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him." Nay, antecedent to this, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Lastly, he performed the whole course of his obedience under the influence of the Holy Ghost. "The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Thus he did all those things that were pleasing to his Father.

5. The Holy Spirit displayed his power and love by supporting and comforting the Son in his sufferings, and at his death. "Through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself without spot to God." This does not exclude his divine nature, but supposeth it. "By himself he purged our sins." But it seems to be meant, principally, of the Holy Spirit; for all the actings upon his human nature are represented in scripture as being by him. If Christ had fainted in the day of adversity, his strength had been small—too small for him and us. But saith the Father, "I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall not fail nor be discouraged." And again, "Mine arm shall strengthen him." And, saith the Son himself, "The Lord God will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded." His faith in, and submission to the will of the Father, his love to men, his zeal, fortitude and hope, shone with most distinguished splendor on the cross. "He, for the joy that was set before him, (over against him) endured the cross, despising the shame;" because he knew he would soon ascend to his throne and his Father. Nay, in the hour of his distress, when "it pleased the Lord to bruise him"—when crying after a departed God, he expressed his entire confidence in him: "*My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?*" Under all his sufferings and desertions, his faith was

victorious. Thus he drew his last breath: "*Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit, and gave up the ghost.*"

6. The resurrection of Christ was another period when the Holy Spirit displayed his love and power to the Son. *Then* he was declared to be "the Son of God, with power, by the Spirit of holiness." Thus, we read of "the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead;" that this Spirit is to quicken us. He was put to death in the flesh, but "quickened by the Spirit."

7. Lastly: all the great and distinguished blessings which Christ conferred upon the disciples, after his resurrection, before he ascended up into heaven, were bestowed through the Holy Ghost. "He opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures:" he gave them a commission to "teach and baptize all nations." Thus it was through the Holy Ghost he gave them commandments. And they were not only convinced of the truth of the resurrection themselves, but taught to publish it for the benefit of others, that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." We proceed,

Secondly, to contemplate *how* the Holy Spirit displays his love to men, by applying to them the great salvation. Here we shall first mention some very distinguished and wonderful acts of his love, to the apostles and others, very soon after Christ ascended up into heaven: secondly, show *how* his love is displayed in all succeeding generations, till the work of salvation be completed.

First, let us contemplate some of the signal displays of the Spirit's love to the apostles and others, soon after Christ ascended up into heaven.

(1.) He gave a more *clear revelation* of the mysteries of the gospel to the apostles, which they were to preach to others, as Christ himself had declared: "I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now: howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." He did not reveal any new truths which they never heard, but he brought *old truths* to their remembrance with new illumination. He more fully cleared up the character and work of the Saviour himself, as to the divinity of his person; his mission, as the long expected Messiah, who was promised should come into the world; the perfection of his work; that "he made peace by the blood of his cross;" that he had a full title to the reward; ascended up into heaven to possess it; and lastly, that "he shall appear the second time without sin, unto salvation, to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe."

Formerly, whenever he spake of his dying and leaving them, "sorrow filled their hearts: Peter rebuked him." When the time came on that he must be delivered up, they "all forsook him and fled." They could not endure the thoughts of the cross. "All of them were offended because of him that night: the shepherd was smitten, and the sheep of the flock scattered abroad." But *now* "the offence of the cross ceased."—Thus they spake of the justice and holiness of God, and the cruelty and wickedness of men, without any difficulty; as Peter did to the Jews, who were betrayers and murderers. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it." And, having given a short account of his humiliation and exaltation, concludes thus: "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made (declared) that same Jesus, whom

ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." They join the two extremes of heaven and earth in their argument. "Who being in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God hath highly exalted him," (even raised him, above all parallel) "and given him a name which is above every name, that *at* (i. e. by faith *in*) the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and beings in earth, and beings under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord," (Jehovah) "to the glory of God the Father." They were no longer ashamed of his cross. Nay, saith Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ."

(2.) The Holy Spirit conferred upon the Apostles and others, many spiritual and supernatural gifts. When Christ was just going to leave the disciples, and go up, for good and all to the kingdom, he said unto them, "Behold I send the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." They did so, and the Holy Ghost came upon them. "That signifies, first, their authority to go abroad. Secondly, it imparts their capacity to go upon this great expedition. For as the Holy Ghost came upon them in the shape of cloven and flaming tongues, so that was an emblem, both that they should speak all languages, and that the word of the Lord in their mouths, would shine, and search and pierce like fire." Nor was this limited to the Apostles, for we read in another place: "While Peter spake, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word, (Acts x. 44.) viz: Cornelius, and his friends, whom he had called together. (ver. 24.) But how did he fall on them? Peter himself explains it. (Chap. xi. 15.) "As on us at the beginning," (i. e. in a miraculous manner.) This was an accomplishment of what Christ had said, "These signs shall follow them that believe, in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues," &c. Nay, in another place we read: "He that believeth on me, the works which I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." Thus, "those that were laid upon beds and couches in the streets, were healed with the shadow of Peter passing by. And special miracles were wrought by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sickly, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out of them." The reason of these greater works done by the Apostles, was Christ's going to the Father, which made way for such an extraordinary pouring forth of the Spirit. And it is proper to observe, that this tended not so much for the reputation of their particular persons, as for the glory of Christ; for thus they proved the truth of the gospel, and then it had a free course and was glorified.

(3.) By the conversion of great multitudes. Three thousand, who concurred in the crucifixion of Christ were converted by means of one sermon. They soon increased to five thousand. And again, we read, that "multitudes," (myriads) "believed." The word of God grew and multiplied. At Samaria, when Philip preached the gospel to them, it is said "the people with *one accord* gave heed to the words which he spake," which is more surprising, because they had all given heed to Simon the Sorcerer before, "from the least to the greatest." Even in the days of the Apostles, there were "saints in Caesar's household," and they were in all places of the Roman empire, long before it became Christian. And how was all this accomplished! The Apostle declares,

"My speech and my preaching was in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power."

(4.) The Spirit qualified the Apostles to defend the gospel against all the arguments of the adversaries. It is very surprising that a few illiterate fishermen should be commissioned to go over the world, and confront the learning of all the places they came into by the success of the gospel. Saith Christ himself, "ye shall be brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake, and it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore, in your hearts, not to meditate in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gain say or resist." This surprised the council at Jerusalem; "They perceived the boldness of Peter and John, and seeing they were ignorant and unlearned men, they marvelled at it, and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Stephen lost his life in the cause, but they could not resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." They were made ministers "according to the grace of God, given to them by the effectual working of his power."

(5.) Lastly, the Holy Spirit supported and comforted the Apostles and others, in all their sufferings for the gospel, and especially when sealing their testimony with their blood. Christ gave the disciples such warnings about their works, as would rather have prevented than persuaded them to engage in it. "The time will come," saith he, "that he that kills you, will think he doth God service; and these things will they do unto you because they have not known the Father nor me." Saith Paul, "I think that God hath set forth us, the Apostles, as it were appointed unto death;" he protsets for his part, that "he died daily." Others "endured a great fight of afflictions." And yet, what meekness, patience and fortitude did they display, by "the glorious Spirit of God resting upon them." "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods: rejoiced in tribulation; and always triumphed in Christ Jesus. They "approved themselves the ministers of God, in much patience, afflictions, necessities, distresses: in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults." For saith Paul, "It is God who comforteth us in all our tribulations: And as our tribulations for Christ abound, our consolations by Christ much more abound." He threw all his afflictions into future glory. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed." Nay, saith he, "It is my earnest expectasion, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." Then you see, they were not afraid of a violent death. And indeed the most of them were called to seal their faith in the gospel with their blood; which was the highest testimony that nature could give to what grace had taught: "They overcame, by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony: no terror could drive them from it; by their fall they conquered—their dying was voluntary—they loved not their lives unto the death. There was something they loved better: as Paul wrote to the Phillians, "yea, if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. These long and severe sufferings did not grieve and tire him out: But when the time of his departure is at hand, he is ready to be offered up having fought a good fight, and finished his course; and kept the faith," without which all rest had been impossible. This is well expressed by these lines of the Poet:

"From whence but heaven could men unskill'd in arts,
In different ages born, in several parts,

Weave such agreeing truth? or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price." *

[To be concluded.]

ART. III. Pittsburg Convention.

Proceedings of the Pittsburg Convention, called by the Signers of the Act and Testimony, May 11th, 1835.

Resolved, unanimously, That the thanks of this convention be given to the trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church, and to the people of Pittsburg and its vicinity, for their kindness and hospitality, manifested to the members of this convention during its sittings.

Unanimously resolved, That the thanks of this house be given to those editors of religious papers, who, by giving publicity to the Act and Testimony, and other documents connected with the same, have contributed to the furtherance of the views of this convention, in reference to the much desired reform in the church.

The convention having endeavored to execute the trust confided to them, in the important particulars of memorializing the General Assembly, and provided for giving to their constituents a detail of their transactions, by the publication of all their minutes, unanimously adopted the following resolutions, viz:

1. That this convention are deeply impressed with the conviction, that the Act and Testimony prepared by some of the minority of the last General Assembly, in connection with other brethren, and since that time so extensively adopted, has been, under the smiles and blessing of God, of marked and extensive benefit to our beloved church.

2. That we recognize our obligations in the most lively gratitude to God, for the care of Providence in bringing together the members of this convention in health and safety, and in an especial manner, for uniting us together in the most harmonious accord, in all measures that have been discussed and adopted.

3. That the convention declare that after prayer and thanksgiving, its proceedings will be terminated, and that of course it will be considered finally dissolved.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, prayer and praise to God were offered, the apostolic benediction was pronounced, and the President declared the convention finally dissolved.

MEMORIAL

(AS ADOPTED BY THE CONVENTION.)

To the Reverend Moderator and General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Memorial and Petition of the undersigned Ministers and ruling Elders of said Church, most affectionately sheweth:

That, in the exercise of a common right, guaranteed by the God of nature to all his rational creatures upon earth, and fully set forth in the sacred scriptures as the birthright of every child of his covenant, we come—and we desire to come with the spirit of the meek and lowly Lamb of God—into the presence of this reverend body, as possessing the only adequate power to afford the relief we desire. We come to spread before you our grievances, and to ask the interposition of your authority for their redress.

With you we recognize the unity and universality of that church of the living Redeemer which he hath purchased with his own blood. "The

* Bradbury's Sermons on the Mystery of Godliness, p. 435.

visible church, which is universal, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." "By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit."

With us you will doubtless agree, that this church universal is called out of the world, and constituted and organized by her divine Head into a household and family, under general laws and regulations imposed upon her by his own supreme authority. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God"—"of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." It is not left to the corrupt volition of men, whether they will or will not come into this family. On the contrary, they are laid under eternal obligations, by the voice of the Son of Man, calling them, in the sweet promises of the gospel, to life, and peace, and joy. Others innumerable are born members of his church, and it is not optional with them—they may not, if they choose, expatriate themselves from his blessed kingdom. On the contrary, the entire weight of their heavenly Father's authority lies upon them, and binds them to a faithful improvement and everlasting possession of their invaluable birthright.

Still, though the visible church universal is thus organized and constituted, yet, as it is physically impossible that all this church can act together; as it must be collected in various parts of the world into distinct bodies for purposes of worship, and the regulation of social, and, as it were, domestic relations; as the geographical divisions of the world, and the political distinctions which the providence of God has permitted to exist, imperiously call for social organizations of smaller numbers, we think it cannot be denied that in this restricted sense the church, or, to speak more precisely, the sections of the church, must necessarily be voluntary associations; that is, Christians are left to associate as they may choose into distinct bands for mutual convenience and christian communion. These distinct communities of believers may also voluntarily connect themselves together into larger bodies, according to the principles laid down in the scriptures and in the standards of the church, which this venerable body represents. Thus is this General Assembly constituted, and in this sense the Presbyterian church is a voluntary association. No man is at liberty to separate himself from the visible church, but any man may separate from this portion of it, and attach himself to another. On this principle of common right and common freedom, is the Presbyterian church founded, and therefore she declares that "every christian church or union, or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its *communion*, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed. They think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith."—(*Form of Government*, chap. i. 2, 5.)

Agreeably to these principles, the constitution of our church makes the Presbyteries the fountains of power: they create the General Assembly. To them is reserved, according to the scriptures, the power of ordination, installation, removal, and judging of ministers. The Presbytery only can confer ministerial authority; the Presbytery only can take it away. The Presbytery can refuse to ordain or to admit into their number any person whom they judge erroneous or scandalous. If this power does not exist in the Presbytery, your memorialists can see no principle of self-preservation in the body. If every Presbytery is bound to receive all who may present themselves and claim admission on the authority of credentials from a foreign body, or from another Presbytery, it is self-

evident that the defection of one Presbytery from the truth and purity of the gospel may involve the entire body in the same corruption. There is no conservative power. The very ends of Presbyterial existence, as laid down in our constitution, are defeated, and a wide door and effectual is thrown open for the introduction of whatever errors it may please the enemies of truth to send abroad among our churches. And here, Rev. fathers and brethren, is the

FIRST grievance over which we mourn.

The last General Assembly, by an act recorded in page 26 of their printed minutes, has denied this right to the Presbyteries, and by that denial has opened the flood-gates of error, which, if not soon stopped, must sweep away the fair fabric of our church's purity, and leave us to sorrow over the melancholy wreck of our Zion, without a willow on which to hang our harps. In behalf of the Presbyteries to which we respectively belong, and of all other true Presbyteries of our beloved church, we invoke a return to the genius of the constitution; a restoration of the right and power of self-preservation; a repeal of the obnoxious act, and a distinct recognition, by this Assembly, of the inalienable right, in every Presbytery, of examining every applicant for admission into their number, be his credentials what they may, and of rejecting him, provided they think his admission would endanger their own purity and peace.

2. Intimately connected with, and nearly allied to this, is our SECOND grievance, viz: an act of the last General Assembly, recorded in their minutes, page 26, whereby the right and propriety of a Presbytery's taking up and censuring a printed publication, irrespective of its author, is denied.

This act is more offensive, because it is contrary to the practice of former General Assemblies, and inconsistent with the principles of freedom guaranteed in the word of God, and the constitution of our church. The act in question, whilst it appears to your memorialists to extend this right to errorists, denies a correspondent right in a Presbytery. The abettor of false doctrine may freely divulge his opinions. Any private citizen of the commonwealth, or member of the church or Presbytery, may freely criticise and severely censure the errors of the published book, but a Presbytery has no rights of this kind. They may not lift the voice of warning; they must not wisper a censure upon the book: they can only try the man. The pestilential volume may send forth its poisonous infection among the flock, "over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers," and for whose purity and peace and salvation they are held accountable by the Chief Shepherd; but their Presbyterial hands are tied up. They dare not lift a finger: they can only bring charges against the author.

But, reverend fathers and brethren, if the author thus arraigned be artful, and disposed to give trouble, as history teaches us errorists are likely to be, who can tell how long he may perplex the court and defer the issue of his trial? Meanwhile, however, the leaven of false doctrine is working its way. The uncensured and uncensurable book is poisoning the minds of the people, and the Presbytery either cannot or will not apply the remedy. Your memorialists most respectfully and earnestly entreat a reversal of the obnoxious resolution referred to.

3. The THIRD item of grievance and petition which we beg leave to present, is at the same time an aggravation of the second, viz: the erection of church courts, especially Presbyteries and Synods, upon the principle of "elective affinity," so called by its primitive advocates; that is, having regard not to geographical limits—not to convenience for attendance of the members—not to the expedition of business, but to diversities

of doctrinal views and church policy in those elected to such bodies, from their brethren and from the standards of the church; to personal animosities and antipathies growing out of such diversities; and to the consequent enlargement of this alienated interest of sentiment and feeling.—Where a Presbytery and Synod of this description exist, it is easy to see how it aggravates the grievance just presented. If, agreeably to the injunction of the last General Assembly, some person does undertake the painful and unpleasant duty of preferring charges against the author of the book, can it be supposed that a Presbytery, to whom such author is bound by the very affinities of such doctrine, will cut the bonds of their own union, by condemning either the book or its author? And if they should so far forget themselves as to commit the suicidal act of condemning the very doctrines which constitute the principle of their affinity, will their Synod do the same? Will it turn recreant to the cause for which it was created?

Thus the Assembly must perceive, that every such prosecution before such body must, if issued at all, be finally issued in the Assembly; and so long as the General Assemblies of our church consent to the existence of such bodies, just so long do they pledge themselves to protect their action. We therefore have no hope of redress, but in a change of purpose and action in the supreme judicatory of our beloved church. You, brethren, and you only, can lay the axe at the root of this evil.

Let us take another view of this subject. Our *Book of Discipline* says, (Form of Government, chap. x. 2,) "A Presbytery consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each congregation within a certain district." But the acts of some late General Assemblies have practically contradicted this clause. It is not true, either of "the Presbytery of Philadelphia," or of "the [Assembly's] Second Presbytery of Philadelphia," or of "the Second [Synodical] Presbytery of Philadelphia," that it "consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each congregation within a certain district."

Besides, the natural, and your memorialists believe the inevitable consequence of this principle is, increased alienation, strife for numbers and preponderance, division of churches, disruption of harmony in congregations, the encouragement of dissatisfied spirits, and formation of parties, and all the miseries of violent party strife. Many of us do honestly believe that the practical effects have been schism in the body—real, substantial, melancholy schism—schism more complete than if different denominations had been at once constituted. The alienation is more perfect than that which exists between either of the bodies and any other denomination covering the same territory. Hence we do most earnestly entreat this Assembly—for the purity of Zion, and the peace of the church—we pray for a reversal of the principle, and all the acts springing from it, and a restoration of the Synod created thereby to their former ecclesiastical position.

Nearly allied to this is our **FOURTH** item of grievance, viz: the existence and operation, within our church, of a Missionary Society in no sense amenable to her ecclesiastical jurisdiction. And here you will bear with us, first, in pointing out the connection with the preceding. If Presbyteries do exist, on the avowed principle of diversity in doctrinal opinion and feeling, and have the power of licensing and ordaining (in many instances *sine titulo*) men of their own creeds, then a missionary institution seems requisite to send such licentiates and ministers into the field. Such an institution does exist, bound by its own rules to sustain missionaries, irrespective of their adherence to, or rejection of, the doctrinal standards of our church. This institution operates largely in our congregations; first, by sweeping away from our own board the funds

which, by the laws of all social order, ought to come into the treasury of the body to which its possessors belong; and, *secondly*, by throwing into our Presbyteries brethren who, in many instances, have never adopted the standards of our church at all, and in more, who have only adopted them "*for substance of doctrine*;" that is, just as much of them as suits their own views. Thus a separate moneyed interest is created and kept up in the bosom of the same christian community. The Assembly's own Board of Missions, created by herself, governed by herself, and amenable to herself, finds a great and powerful rival in her own house, with whom she comes in perpetual collision. And rival agents meet on the same field, and frequently those of our own church are foiled in their efforts by the improper interference and influence of an institution which owns no allegiance to us, and feels no obligations to our courts. So violent were these contentions, that the Assembly of 1831 recommended a *convention* to be held in Cincinnati to adjust the difficulties. This convention was held: it decided in favor of the church's carrying on her own missions by her own board. Still, however, the foreign society kept the field, and continues to this hour to conflict with your board.

Now, fathers and brethren, these things afflict us exceedingly. We are pained to see such an inveterate warfare carried on so long. And we are unspeakably distressed to be constrained to view this as a part of a great system of operations whose tendency is to subvert the foundations of our Zion. The evidence of such a system forces itself upon us. We cannot shut our eyes against it if we would, and we would not if we could. Painful as the vision is, we are determined to behold it steadfastly; and we crave the attention of this venerable body to the same.—Look, we pray you, to the facts. A large moneyed institution—(for that is a large moneyed institution which has a large income, from whatever source)—a large moneyed institution, over which neither you as an Assembly, nor the Presbyteries which give you an annual existence, nor the Synods intermediate, have any control, has subsidised almost your whole western territory. "A gift blindeth the eyes." Can a minister, or an elder, whose congregation is supported in a large degree by a power foreign to your church, free himself utterly from foreign influence? Vain is the hope! Human nature is not thus constituted. Without impeaching the honesty and the honor of persons thus situated, we feel confident that an influence great and effectual must rest in the hands that dispense this bounty.

But let the church be her own almoner, and every time her hand is opened to her sons and her daughters, she binds them the more closely to her interests. Her constitution, whose legitimate operations produce these happy results, becomes the rallying point of recoiling gratitude,—and, instead of jarring and contention without end, union in the truth and peace, as its blessed effect, must fill our Zion with joy and gladness. We pray this General Assembly to sustain her own Board of Missions, by solemnly enjoining upon all the churches to contribute to its funds, and by rescinding the resolutions formerly passed, which recommended to their patronage the Home Missionary Society.

5. Your attention is now invited to another part of the same system. Before youth looking forward to the gospel ministry can be properly licensed and sent forth, they must be educated; and efforts have been already made in this cause worthy of high commendation. Nor have we any thing to object against efforts either to prepare or to send men to preach to the destitute at home or abroad. Both these causes we desire to see prospering. For both we have labored and prayed, and for both we will continue to labor and pray. But then we desire to see them prospering consistently with regard to the truth and purity and integrity

of our own church. The great burden of ministerial duty is to enlighten and save the world; and no obligation more sacred and solemn lies upon them, than that of training the heralds of the cross who are to bear the banner of her faith in triumph round the world. Let the church give good heed to this great concern, and the work of salvation will go on; let her neglect this, or do it in a careless manner, and the wheels of the gospel chariot must move heavily—stop—perhaps retrograde.

Now the question before us is, to whom shall this most sacred and solemn duty be entrusted by the church? Shall she do it herself, with her own hands? or shall she throw it into the hands of a body, self-created, and in no sense amenable to her ecclesiastical tribunals?—a body which may change in half a generation, and train her sons to her own destruction? This is the question we would press upon your consideration; and we would most respectfully suggest, that no church can be safe in her doctrinal standards—safe in her ecclesiastical polity—safe in her financial operations—safe in the independence of her ministry, if that ministry are dependent upon an independent foreign body; and especially if their houses and lands, their libraries and furniture, are under bonds. Without any impeachment of motives, or imputation of extraordinary weakness, we beg leave to repeat, “a gift blindeth the eyes,” and to refer to the course of remark under the preceding item.

Similar collisions occur here also. Your agents are met in the field by the agents of a society beyond your control. They are often beaten off the ground, and the six or seven hundred young men under the care of your Board of Education are reduced to a precarious dependence: whereas, did the church, in her highest ecclesiastical court, stand forth in her own defence, her treasury would overflow, and all these collisions and conflicts of varied interests would cease; whilst her own funds would go to her own sons, and not to their prejudice, for the maintenance of those in other churches, who are never expected to aid in building up the walls of our Zion. We pray and beseech this reverend body to sustain by all the weight of its influence, the education cause of our own church.

6. In the apprehension of your memorialists, not a small proportion of the evils which distract our Zion have grown and do still grow out of “the plan of union” adopted in 1801. We say nothing here of the wisdom of that measure at the time, nor of its constitutionality. We know it was the work of wise and good men. But we must be allowed to express the opinion, that *now* it leads to alienation, contentions and disorders. For proof of this we have only to refer to the minutes of preceding General Assemblies. It is notorious that very painful conflicts have occurred in the Assembly on this very subject. Brethren had long occupied seats in this body, who were not ruling elders, and never had been Presbyterians, and, it is believed, never intended to become Presbyterians. Nor was this evil remedied without a long and arduous and painful struggle. Under the perfect conviction that peace will never dwell with us whilst the jarring elements of this discord exist together, we beseech this Assembly to annul that act; and for the simple additional reason that the terms of compact are not complied with by our congregational brethren.

In proof of this we allege that “the plan of union” contemplates the existence of a Congregational Association and of a Presbytery on the same ground; whereas we apprehend the facts generally to be otherwise. The Association retains its essential character as such, but is called a Presbytery. Congregational ministers change simply the name, without ever adopting sincerely the Confession of Faith of this church. So far from such adoption, the Presbyteries of Grand River and Portage on May 1, 1822, adopted a confession of faith for their own churches.

And although a subsequent General Assembly ordered the formula of questions in our Book to be propounded to all the members of these Presbyteries, yet your memorialists have reason to believe that in some instances they were not answered affirmatively at all, and in others with express reservations.

Again: that plan of union provides that every mixed congregation shall appoint a standing committee; "And provided that the said standing committee of any church shall depute one of themselves to attend the Presbytery, he may have the same right to sit and act in the Presbytery as a ruling elder of the Presbyterian church." Yet we have reason to believe that members of churches often sit in Presbytery, who are neither ruling elders nor committee men; and we know such have occupied seats in the General Assembly. This is an open infraction of the "Plan of Union." Hence we can perceive no obligation binding the Assembly to adhere to a conventional agreement that is practically violated by the other party, and we pray that it may be formally annulled.

7. Our next grievance is of a similar character, viz: the plan of union and correspondence with the Congregational Associations of New England, and with other churches. It is true, that the relinquishment of the right of voting in the General Assembly has removed part of the evil.—No longer now can our constitutional order be voted down by brethren opposed to it in profession and principle. Still, however, against this union there are serious objections.

It gives weight in counsel and debate, which may command votes, to persons who belong not to our society, and who may have a sectarian purpose to answer by taking a particular side. Such things some of us have seen on the floor of the Assembly.

Besides, the whole matter is unconstitutional. The General Assembly never had the power of granting a seat in this house to any person.—(Form of Government, chap. xii. 2.) "The General Assembly shall consist of an equal delegation of bishops and elders from each Presbytery." Nor does our constitution recognize any other mode of acquiring a right to a seat here. This is a delegated—it is a representative body, and in the very nature of a delegation, unless the delegates are *expressly* empowered to delegate others, they *have* no such power. Our constitution knows no such anomaly as representatives transferring the power of representation to others.

We humbly conceive that our Book, (chap. xii. 5,) in conceding to the Assembly the power of "corresponding with foreign churches, on such terms as may be agreed upon by the Assembly and the corresponding body," does not contemplate the violation of the fundamental principle quoted in the preceding paragraph, by granting seats in this house to persons not delegated by any Presbytery; for, if the Assembly have the power of conferring a right to deliberate and vote, it may be so exercised as to bring the church under foreign dominion. Against all this the constitution presents an insuperable barrier, in the 6th section of this chapter, where the Presbyteries reserve to themselves the exclusive power of establishing any constitutional rule. Every regulation affecting constitutional principles must be referred to the Presbyteries, and be by a majority of them adopted, before they can be admitted as binding. This, in reference to the "Plan of Union," has never been done. Now, clearly, this power of granting seats in the Assembly vitally affects the constitution, which ought not to be sacrificed either to expediency or courtesy.

Hence, with all due respect and affection to the good brethren of other denominations, we pray this General Assembly to restore the constitution, by repealing the act which assumes this stretch of power.

8. Finally, as the object of all ecclesiastical order is *truth*, in the belief, love and practice of it; and as to the General Assembly also belongs the power of bearing testimony against error in doctrine, your memorialists would humbly call your attention to the present state of the church in this behalf. There is nothing worth contending for but truth; and, if we are not greatly mistaken, great and fearful inroads are made on the doctrinal standards of our church—and that too, not in reference to matters of minor consequence, but in the very fundamental principles of the gospel.

One alarming feature of the errors against which we would earnestly entreat this General Assembly to lift up a strong testimony, we beg leave to present. It is their systematic arrangement. Did a solitary individual here and there, in cases few and far between, touch upon a single insulated position that is false, and maintain it even with pertinacity, it would not afford ground of serious alarm. But the case is far otherwise. The errors abroad in the church are fundamental, vital and systematic. The maintenance of one involves the whole, and must lead a logical mind to embrace the system. Now the system appears to your memorialists to lead directly towards Socinianism. This language may seem harsh and severe. Alas! dear brethren! it is the harshness of love and the severity of truth. It is not pleasant for us to entertain such an opinion, but with our eyes and our ears open, it is impossible to avoid it. The evidence rushes upon us from the pulpit and the press, and we have no power of resistance. That which the understanding clearly perceives, the mind, with its fondest desires to the contrary, must believe. It is painful for the convicted sinner to believe that his soul is exposed to the wrath divine: it is painful for us to believe that our brethren are departing from the foundations of gospel truth. But a dark hour there often is before the bright dawn of heaven's cheering light upon the soul benighted; may we hope from the action of this venerable body a return to the pure light of the scripture truth, and a strong testimony against the errors that overturn our constitutional standards?

Another alarming feature is the boldness and pertinacity with which the very existence of these errors is denied. To this general Assembly it would not be information, were we to state, that the same system of error has been characterised by the same wily policy in every age of its appearance in the church. It has ever been its course at first to deny its own existence, and when that was no longer practicable, to assume a mask, and clothe itself with zeal as a cloak. This strong feature of the modern, singularly identifies it with the ancient heresy.

It is not our purpose at present to go into a *discussion* of these doctrines, nor yet to adduce proof of their existence in our church. The evidence of this is as clear as the evidence of your existence in this house to-day. The teeming press and the groaning pulpit proclaim it. It may be proper simply to present an outline of the system. Thus:

1. *The doctrine of Adam's federal headship, or representative character, is denied.*

2. *The doctrine of original sin is denied.*

3. *The doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is denied.*

The rejection of these necessarily leads to

4. *A denial of the doctrine of Christ's federal headship, or representative character.*

5. *A denial of the imputation of his righteousness to the believer, as the essential procuring cause of his justification.*

6. *A rejection of the true, proper, vicarious nature of the atonement of*

Christ; and holds up his sufferings, his tears and groans and anguish and death, as a mere exhibition—a show unmeaning, for a purpose not in accordance with revealed truth.

Thus the daughter of Zion searches in vain in the luxuriant garden of these errors for the beloved of her soul, and in the anguish of her disappointment exclaims, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

But these errors do not terminate in simple negation. Another system is substituted in the room of the gospel thus rejected: it is the system of human perfectibility. Thus:

1. *The doctrine of human ability is held, involving the principle, and gratuitously assuming it as true, that man's moral obligations are measured and bounded by his present ability to meet all the requirements of God's law.*

2. *Accordingly, the necessity of the agency, the omnipotent agency of the Spirit of God in the conversion of the soul, is denied, and conversion is affirmed to be the work of the creature. Man regenerates his own soul—the Spirit's agency is that of mere moral suasion. Regeneration is simply an act of the mind—the first in the series of holy acts. Faith is an act of the mind, and nothing but an act of the mind.*

Now, reverend fathers and brethren, we humbly conceive that this is another gospel, entirely and essentially different from that laid down in the Bible and our Confession of Faith. And we do most solemnly and sorrowfully believe, that unless the Spirit of the Lord raise up a standard against it, it will be followed in our church, as it has been elsewhere, by the entire system of Pelagianism, and ultimately of Socinianism. If the atonement is not essentially vicarious and penal, why demand a *divine Redeemer*? If an *exhibition* is all that is required, why not hold up Stephen, or Peter, or Paul, or John Huss, or John Rogers? This tendency towards Socinianism we think is plainly manifested in the denial of the eternal filiation of the Son of God.

Again: if the Spirit's work is merely a moral suasion, why a Divine and Almighty Spirit? Must not the mind which denies the necessity of an omnipotent influence be strongly tempted to disbelieve the existence of an omnipotent agent?

That we are not mistaken in our opinion of the tendency of these doctrines, we think is proved by the fact that the Unitarians do claim affinity with them, and express their unfeigned satisfaction at the prospect of a rapid increase of liberal principles.

And now, dear brethren, we approach the termination of this long memorial. We have, perhaps, been tedious. It is because our heart is full of sorrow; and sorrow finds a momentary relief in pouring forth even unavailing complaints. But ours is not a hopeless sorrow. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and we know that his truth, though borne away, insulted and forlorn, into the dark shades of a vain, metaphysical philosophy, will yet break forth, and dispel the gloom by which we are surrounded, and send through our hearts and our churches the light of life and the consolations of love.

In pressing our petition for redress of all the grievances we have enumerated, and such others in regard to measures as the wisdom of this General Assembly may select, we entreat you to turn your eye upon the aspect of the world. Lo! what an inviting field for benevolent enterprise! And is there a body of believers in the whole church militant, invested with so many qualifications to enter it, and gather the rich harvest of glory to our divine Redeemer, as the Presbyterian church? The position of our country points us out—the position of our church points

us out—the position of the world points us out—the voice of unborn and unsanctified millions calls us to the conflict—the Lord of hosts himself has gone down into the plain before us, and chides our long delay. Now we ask, brethren, what causes this delay? Why, when the armies of the living God begin to consolidate, and himself gives the watch word, “*Truth and Victory*”—oh! why this delay? Ah! there is division in the camp! “There be some that trouble us.” *Innovation* distracts our councils, alienates our affections, turns the sword of brother in upon brother, and the Master’s work remains undone. Do you ask how shall the evil be remedied? We reply, let this Assembly come up to the work of reform; let them establish the ancient landmarks of truth; let them unfurl the banner of the constitution; let all who cannot fight under this, grasp the standard that suits their own views—put on their own approved armor—descend into the plain, and stand or fall to their own master. We pledge ourselves in the face of high heaven, the real Presbyterian church will not shrink from the conflict; and though our earthen pitchers may be broken, our lights shall shine, and “the sword of the Lord and of Gideon” shall turn the eye of a gazing world to that point of the field where victory perches on the banner of truth.

Venerable fathers and brethren, we are done. With you and God and Christ and his Spirit we leave our cause. That he may direct all your counsels in this behalf to his own glory and the church’s good, is the sincere prayer of your humble memorialists.

Pittsburg, May 20, 1835.

ART. IV. *Vindication of the Principles of the Church of Scotland, in relation to Questions presently agitated: An Address by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders.*

(Concluded from page 26.)

No argument, we conceive, could be more unsound—no concession more unhappy at the present juncture, than that patronage is essential to an establishment. To contend that the members of an established church must forever submit to be deprived of the privilege of electing their own pastors, a privilege which the smallest sect in the country enjoys, and would on no account abdicate, is the sorest stroke which has yet been inflicted on establishments, which indeed would justly deserve all the odium they have incurred, if they necessarily required such a dishonorable compromise of ecclesiastical freedom. But it is a fallacy to imagine that the church is bound to relinquish the power of nominating to her benefices, as an equivalent for the support and countenance which she derives from the State. No such equivalent is expected in the case of a friendly alliance between two independent powers, even although blood and treasure may have been expended in maintaining it. The proper way in which the State is remunerated for its external support, is by the benefit which society receives from the moral and religious influence of the church, and not by robbing her of her spiritual privileges, which may convert her into a political engine to serve the purposes of State empirics, but can never (and now much less than ever) render her an effective instrument in promoting the public good. Neither the ancient kings of Israel, nor the early Christians who richly endowed the church in the apostolic

age, nor some of the most munificent princes at a later period, ever claimed such a compensation from the church. Twice did the government and patrons of Scotland formally restore to the church her liberties, and as often was she despoiled of them by an arbitrary and Jacobitish administration. Our present rulers, above all that have preceded them, have the least show of reason for continuing to exact such a sacrifice on the part of the church. They have extended the political privileges of the people, in the way of abolishing, without pity or remuneration, all civic and individual monopoly of elective power, and they cannot, without the most glaring inconsistency, refuse to restore to the church those ecclesiastical privileges of which she has been violently or fraudulently denuded, even though it should be at the expense of nullifying the illicit and simoniacal contracts on which the rights of patronage were originally founded. Let them not with one hand profess to support the church, while with the other they strip her of that sacred liberty wherewith Christ has made her free; thus committing an act of greater impolicy and sacrilege than if they had alienated all the temporalities of the church and dismantled a thousand bishoprics. But whatever blame may attach to our civil rulers in this matter, it is the General Assembly which has pronounced the sentence, that the yoke of patronage shall continue to be wreathed about the neck of the christian people of Scotland; and we are sorry to be obliged to add that no small share of the responsibility of that deed lies on those ministers and elders who are usually called orthodox and popular.

But we protest against patronage, not only as inimical to the independence of the church in general, by depriving her of a right belonging to every free society, but also as opposed to the rights of the christian people, as such, to be consulted in the choice of their ecclesiastical teachers and rulers. So great respect is every where in scripture shown to the choice of the people, that under the Old Testament, their formal consent was required to establish a relation between them and those rulers who had been selected for office by God himself. The spiritual privilege of choosing their own pastors and elders, which differs entirely from the political right of the individual to choose his religious profession, belongs, by divine grant, to the christian people, as forming an integral part of the church diffusive. And it is quite compatible with the judicial powers of the church courts, whose office it is to pass both an initiative and definitive judgment on the ministerial qualifications of the persons chosen.

From the principles now laid down, and the statements made, it must be obvious, that this Synod have no prospect of an immediate return to the communion of the Established church. They still view this as a happy and desirable consummation, which, in all their contendings, they would not wish to lose sight of. Nay, we hold ourselves bound in duty, according to the terms of the Protestation and Appeal made by our fathers, to "the first free, faithful and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland," to return to her fellowship, as soon as such an Assembly has taken up that appeal, and answered it in the way of removing the grounds of our secession.* Meanwhile, a sense of the obligations under which we lie, from the word of God, and the solemn engagements we have contracted, requires us to remain in a state of separation; and, by doing so, we are persuaded we shall contribute more to advance the real interests of the Church of Scotland—more to accelerate her reformation—and more to bring about such a union with her as shall be creditable to truth, than by hastily, and on the first appearance of a change of measures, rushing into her arms, and merging our present joint

* See Appendix, No. II.

and judicial testimony in any personal liberty we might enjoy, in common with those of opposite principles, within the bosom of the Establishment. Much, however, may be done within a short time, under the influences of the Spirit, for removing our present grounds of secession. To those in the national church who are honestly desirous to see this accomplished, and are using means to bring it about, we wish all success in the Lord. Whatever may be the feelings of others, they, at least, will not take offence at our endeavoring to exonerate our consciences, by performing what has been to us no pleasing task. We shall only say farther, that they cannot expect the blessing of heaven on the measures of a carnal, timid and compromising policy; and we trust that no fears of danger, from any quarter, will induce them to make a common cause with the enemies of Presbytery, or to form any coalition which will lay additional bars in the way of their prosecuting reformation, and removing from the church whatever dishonors Christ, grieves his friends, or causes scandal to the world. Never was admonition more seasonable, than that which God gave of old to the people of Judah is at the present time: "Say ye not, A confederacy! to all to whom this people shall say, A confederacy! neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread; and he will be for a sanctuary."

To the professed friends of the covenanted cause in other denominations, we would earnestly repeat the call which we formerly gave, to consider the necessity of union and co-operation in its defence at the present crisis. This assuredly is not the time when either the pride of party or the recollection of past offences ought to be allowed to defeat attempts at conciliation, and stand in the way of the pleasure, the advantage, and the duty of contending, under one banner, for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let the sad consequences of misunderstanding among the friends of this cause in former times of peril, warn us to avoid similar conduct, and excite us to repair, instead of seeking to perpetuate, the breaches which they have occasioned. United exertions are required to maintain a faithful testimony in a state of separation, and united wisdom will be useful in dealing with the judicatories of the Establishment, if Providence should at any future period prepare the way for direct intercourse with them. When the enemies of the Reformation are strengthening themselves by combination, it ill becomes its friends to weaken each other's hands by remaining separate, especially when they have in the cause which they espouse such a well defined ground, and in the solemn engagements, whose obligation they agree in owning, such a sacred pledge of union. How can the friends of "the covenanted uniformity" expect the generation to appreciate that desirable object, while they themselves set an example of disunion, and encourage a spirit of sectarian independence of each other? "Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

APPENDIX, No. II.

What ought to be accounted "a free, faithful and reforming General Assembly?" and does the late Assembly come up to this character so far as to warrant Seceders in taking steps toward a union with the Established Church of Scotland? are questions very interesting at the present juncture. With all tenderness to such a delicate subject, it may be safely stated that the above expressions, as used by the fathers of the Secession, and as explained by their future conduct, were descriptive, not of an Assembly which would be merely willing to re-admit them to communion in the way of allowing them ministerial liberty to testify against defections and abuses, (for this was materially done by the General As-

sembly of 1734,) but such an Assembly as should evince a decided disposition to correct the evils complained of, and to return to her reformed principles and practice. There is, too, an obvious difference between making a separation from a church, and returning to her communion after it has been made. The solemn responsibility which attaches to the former, so long as it can possibly be avoided with a good conscience, might perhaps have induced the first seceding ministers to continue in the church, had they not been forced to a determination by the tyrannical procedure of the judicatories; but it by no means follows that the mere relaxation of arbitrary authority would have warranted them to return. Various improvements also may take place in a church—(witness the present state of the Irish Establishment)—and yet we would hesitate to call her a reforming church. Persons may hail, with thankfulness to God, these improvements, and yet resolve, before moving from their ground, to see such symptoms issuing in some decided measures of general reformation.

By the late enactment in regard to patronage, even though it should prove successful, no assurance has been given, even to the satisfaction of many members of the Establishment, much less to that of those who have left her pale, of a disposition to return to those principles which were once the glory of the Church of Scotland. That church, in her purer times, maintained a judicial testimony against patronage itself, as well as its attendant evils—a testimony which the Secession took up, and which it was enabled, from its separate standing, to carry out in practice by granting to the people their ancient rights, of which patronage had deprived them. This part of the church's testimony, however, has not only been dropped since the Secession, but was formally condemned by a decision of the last General Assembly.

In these circumstances, it cannot be expected by the reflecting portion of the national church, that Seceders, with their declared sentiments on this point, could regard that Assembly either as "faithful or reforming," or that they would be warranted, even in the present critical state of the Establishment, to compromise their profession, by acknowledging it in that character. By doing this, they would forfeit the pledge they have given to the people of Scotland to grant them relief, when required, from the effect of patronage, and the notorious want of evangelical preaching in many parts of the country.

The reader who wishes farther information on these questions, may consult "*Reasons why they have not acceded to the Judicatories of the Established church,*" published in 1735, by the four seceding ministers. In that pamphlet, among other things, which, if done, "might" give them "the comfortable prospect of a pleasant and desirable unity," they require that "the acceptance of presentations should be declared contrary to the principles of this church; and an act passed against any settlement, in time coming, without the call and consent of the majority of the congregation, who are admitted to full communion with the church in all her sealing ordinances."

ART. V. *Psalmody in New-England.*

I know not where, better than here, to insert that article of our church history, which concerns our metrical translation of the psalms now sung in our churches.

About the year 1639, the New English reformers, considering that the

churches enjoyed the other ordinances of heaven in their scriptural purity, were willing that the ordinance of the singing of psalms should be restored among them, unto a share in that purity. Though they blessed God for the religious endeavors of them who translated the Psalms into the metre usually annexed at the end of the Bible, yet they beheld in the translation so many detractions from, additions to, and variations of, not only the text, but the very *sense* of the psalmist, that it was an offence unto them. Resolving, then, upon a new translation, the chief divines in the country took each of them a portion to be translated,—among whom were Mr. Welds and Mr. Eliot, of Roxbury, and Mr. Mather, of Dorchester. These, like the rest, were of so different a genius for their poetry, that Mr. Shepard, of Cambridge, on the occasion addressed them to this purpose.

You Roxbury poets, keep clear of the crime
Of missing to give us very good rhyme :
And you of Dorchester, your verses lengthen,
And with the text's own words you will them strengthen.

The Psalms, thus turned into metre, were printed at Cambridge in the year 1640. But afterwards, it was thought that a little more of art was to be employed upon them; and for that cause they were committed unto Mr. Dunster, who revised and refined this translation, and, (with some assistance from one Mr. Richard Lyon, who, being sent over by Sir Henry Midmay, as an attendant unto his son, then a student in Harvard College, now resided in Mr. Dunster's house :) he brought it into the condition wherein our churches ever since have used it.

Now, though I heartily join with those gentlemen who wish that the *poetry* hereof were mended, yet I must confess, that the Psalms have never yet seen a translation, that I know of, nearer to the Hebrew original; and I am willing to receive the excuse that our translators themselves do offer us, when they say: If the verses are not always so elegant as some desire or expect, let them consider that God's altar needs not our polishings. We have respected rather a plain translation, than to smooth our verses with the sweetness of any paraphrase. We have attended conscience rather than elegance—fidelity rather than ingenuity; that so we may sing in Zion the Lord's songs of praise, according unto his own will, until he bid us enter into our Master's joy, to sing eternal hallelujahs.

Reader, when the Reformation in France began, Clement Marot and Theodore Beza turned the Psalms into French metre, and Lewis Guadimel set melodious tunes unto them—the singing hereof charmed the souls of court and city, town and country. They were sung in the Louvre itself, as well as in the Protestant churches: ladies, nobles, princes—yea, king Henry himself sang them. This one thing mightily contributed unto the downfall of popery, and the progress of the gospel. All ranks of men practised it: a gentleman of the reformed religion would not eat a meal without it. The popish clergy raging hereat, the cardinal of Lorraine got the profane and obscene odes of the pagan poets to be turned into French and sang at the courts, and the divine Psalms were thus banished from that wicked court.

Behold, the reformation pursued by the churches of New-England, by the Psalms in a new metre: God grant the reformation may never be lost, while the Psalms are sung in our churches.

But in this matter, Mr. Dunster is to be acknowledged. And if, unto the Christian, while singing of Psalms on earth, Chrysostom could well

say, Μετ' ἀγγέλων ᾄδεις, μετ' ἀγγέλων ὑμνεῖς, *Thou art in a consort with angels!* how much more may that *now* be said of our Dunster!—*Mather's Magnalia.*

The above extract is from the Ecclesiastical History of New-England, by Cotton Mather, and exhibits the views of the first settlers of New-England respecting the psalmody of scripture. Imitations and paraphrases were not in so high repute at that time as at the present. We should esteem it a privilege to see the version of the Psalms here spoken of.

ART. VI. *The General Assembly.*

The readers of the Monitor will doubtless feel anxious to learn the fate of the Memorial, which we have published in some of the preceding pages of the present No., as the result of the late Presbyterian convention which met at Pittsburg, pursuant to a recommendation contained in the "Act and Testimony." The following are the Preamble and Resolutions which were adopted by the General Assembly in reference to said Memorial. And from these it will be clearly seen, that although the Act and Testimony, from its very beginning, has, by its enemies, (and, may we not say the enemies of the truth?) been ridiculed, caricatured, and most unjustly condemned, it has nevertheless, so far, resulted in great, and we trust lasting good to that branch of the visible church.

The Committee to whom was referred the Memorial and Petition of a number of Ministers of the Presbyterian church, and Ruling Elders, &c., report :

That they have endeavored to deliberate on the said Memorial and Petition, and the other papers committed to them, with all that respect which the character of those from whom they come could not fail to inspire, and with all the calmness, impartiality and solemnity which the deep importance of the subjects on which they have addressed the Assembly so manifestly demands.

In approaching the consideration of these weighty subjects, the committee deem it to be an obvious duty to exclude from their view all those principles which result from the wishes or plans of different parties in the church, and to take for their guide simply the word of God, which we consider the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and those public formularies by which we have solemnly agreed and stipulated with each other, to be governed in all our proceedings. The moment we depart from these, we are not only exposed to all the evils of discord, but also run the risk of destroying those bonds of union by which we have been so long bound together as an ecclesiastical body. There is certainly no portion of the visible church, in which a harmonious accordance with the same adopted formularies, and a uniform submission to the same rules of truth and order are so essential to the maintenance of ecclesiastical peace, and to cordial co-operation in promoting those great purposes for which the church was founded by her King and Head, as among the churches of our denomination. The committee indeed by no means expect, and do not suppose that the Assembly would think of enforcing that perfect agreement in views in every minute particular, which, in a body so extended as the Presbyterian church, has perhaps never been realized; but that an entire and cordial agreement in all the radical principles of that system of truth and order, which is taught in the holy scriptures, which is embodied in our Confession of Faith and Form of Government, and which every minister and elder of the Presbyterian church has solemnly subscribed and promised to maintain, may not only be reasonably expected, but must be as far as possible secured, if we would maintain "the unity of the Spirit," in the bonds of peace and love,—it is presumed the General Assembly will be unanimous in pronouncing. If this be not so, it is in vain that we assemble from year to year—in vain that we hope for intercourse either pleasant or edifying. Our judicatories must be scenes of discord and conflict, and the ties which bind the several parts of our extended body to each other can scarcely fail of being ties of strife and contention.

Under convictions which these general principles are adapted to impress, the committee most deeply feel the importance of some of the conclusions to which they are

constrained to come; and although some of these conclusions are at variance with several acts of the last General Assembly, yet they cannot doubt that they make an essential part of the Presbyterian system, and of course cannot be abandoned without seriously endangering both the comfort and safety of our beloved church.

The committee, therefore, as the result of their deliberations on the documents committed to them, would most respectfully recommend to the Assembly the adoption of the following resolutions, viz:

1. Resolved, That in the judgment of this General Assembly it is the right of every Presbytery to be entirely satisfied of the soundness in the faith and the good character in every respect of those ministers who apply to be admitted into the Presbytery as members, and who bring testimonials of good standing from sister Presbyteries or from foreign bodies, with whom the Presbyterian church is in correspondence. And if there be any reasonable doubt respecting the proper qualification of such candidates, notwithstanding their testimonials, it is the right, and may be the duty of such a Presbytery to examine them, or to take such other methods of being satisfied in regard to their suitable character as may be judged proper; and if such satisfaction be not obtained, to decline receiving them. In such case, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery rejecting the applicant, to make known what it has done to the Presbytery from which he came, with its reasons—it being always understood that each Presbytery is, in this concern as in all others, responsible for its acts to the higher judicatories.

2. Resolved, That in the judgment of this General Assembly, it is the right, and may be the duty of any judicatory of our church to take up, and if it see cause, to bear testimony against any printed publications which may be circulating within its bounds, and which in the judgment of that judicatory may be adapted to inculcate injurious opinions, and this, whether the author be living or dead—whether he be in the communion of our church or not—whether he be a member of the judicatory expressing the opinion, or of some other. A judicatory may be solemnly called upon to warn the churches under its care, and especially the rising generation, against an erroneous book, while the author may not be within their bounds, or immediately responsible at their bar; and while, even if he were thus responsible and within their reach, they might not think it necessary to arraign him as a heretic. To deny our judicatories, as guardians of the churches, this right, would be to deny them one of the most precious and powerful means of bearing testimony against dangerous sentiments, and guarding the children of the church against “that instruction which causeth to err.” The writer of such a book may reside at a distance from the neighborhood in which his work is circulating and supposed to be doing mischief, or he may be so situated that even if it be proper to commence process against them, it may not be possible to commence, or at any rate to issue the process within a number of months. In the mean while, if the right in question be denied, this book may be scattering poison, without the possibility of sending forth an effectual antidote. Indeed, it may be indispensably necessary, in cases which may be easily imagined, to send out such a warning, even though the author of the work were fully acquitted from the charge of heresy.

3. Resolved, that the erection of church courts, and especially of Presbyteries and Synods, on the principle of elective affinity, that is, judicatories not bounded by geographical limits, but having a chief regard to diversities of doctrinal belief and of ecclesiastical policy, is contrary both to the letter and spirit of our institution, and opens a wide door for mischief and abuses of the most serious kind. One such Presbytery, if so disposed, might in process of time fill the whole church with unsound and schismatic ministers, especially if the principle were adopted that regular testimonials must of course secure the admission of those who bore them into any other Presbytery. Such a Presbytery, moreover, being without geographical bounds, might enter the limits and disturb the repose of any church into which it might think proper to intrude, and thus divide churches, stir up strife, and promote party spirit and schism, with all their deplorable consequences. Surely a plan of procedure in the church of God, which naturally and almost unavoidably tends to produce effects such as these, ought to be frowned upon, and as soon as possible terminated by the supreme judicatory of the church. Therefore,

4. Resolved, That at and after the meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia in October next, the Synod of Delaware shall be dissolved, and the Presbyteries constituting the same shall be then and thereafter annexed to the Synod of Philadelphia; and that the Synod of Philadelphia thus constituted by the union aforesaid, shall take such order concerning the organization of its several Presbyteries as may be deemed expedient and constitutional; and that said Synod, if it shall deem it desirable, make application to the next General Assembly for such a division of the Synod as may best suit the convenience of all its Presbyteries, and promote the glory of God.

5. Resolved, That while this General Assembly fully appreciate and deeply deplore the many painful evils which result from the present division in our church, in respect to the method of conducting domestic missions, and the education of beneficiary candi-

dates for the ministry; they are persuaded that it is not expedient to attempt to prohibit within our bounds the operations of the Home Missionary Society or of the Presbyterian Education Society, or any other voluntary association not subject to our control: such an attempt would tend, it is believed, to increase rather than to diminish the existing evils. The Assembly, however, is persuaded that it is the first and binding duty of the Presbyterian church to sustain her own boards; and that voluntary associations, operating within the bosom of the Presbyterian church, and addressing themselves to her members and congregations, are bound upon every principle both of moral and ecclesiastical obligation, neither to educate, nor to send forth as Presbyterians, any individuals known to hold sentiments contrary to the word of God, and to the standards of the Presbyterian church.

6. Resolved, That the Assembly deem it no longer desirable that churches should be formed in our Presbyterian connexion agreeably to the plan adopted by this Assembly and the General Association of Connecticut, in 1801.

(2.) Resolved, That our brethren of the General Association of Connecticut be, and they hereby are respectfully requested to consent that said plan shall be from and after the next meeting of that Association, declared to be annulled.

(3.) Resolved, That the annulling of said plan shall not in any wise interfere with the existence of lawful operations of churches which have been already formed on this plan.

7. Resolved, That this General Assembly see no cause either to terminate or modify the plan of correspondence with the Associations of our Congregational brethren in New-England. That correspondence has been long established. It is believed to have been productive of mutual benefit. It is now divested of the voting power, which alone could be considered as infringing the constitution of our church, by introducing persons clothed with the character of plenary members of the Assembly. It stands at present substantially on the same footing with the visits of our brethren from the Congregational Union of England and Wales; and in the present age of enlarged counsel and of combined effort for the conversion of the world, ought by no means to be abolished. Besides, the Assembly are persuaded that amidst the increasing and growing intercourse between the Presbyterian and Congregational churches, it is desirable to introduce terms of correspondence, even if they did not already exist.

8. Resolved, That while this General Assembly has no means of ascertaining to what extent the doctrinal errors alleged in the Memorial to exist in our church, do really prevail, it cannot hesitate to express the painful conviction that the allegation is by no means unfounded; and at the same time to condemn all such opinions as not distinguishable from Pelagian or Arminian errors; and to declare their judgment that the holding of the opinions referred to, is incompatible with an honest adoption of our Confession of Faith. That this is the case will be doubted by none who impartially consider the statements of that formulary contained in chap. 7, sec. 3 and 4; chap. 7, sec. 2; chap. 8; chap. 9; chap. 10, sec. 1 and 2; chap. 9, sec. 1st,—which sentiments must of course be interpreted in their plain, obvious and hitherto acknowledged sense. Against the doctrinal opinions, therefore, above alluded to, the Assembly would solemnly lift a warning voice, and would enjoin upon all our Presbyteries and Synods to exercise the utmost vigilance in guarding against the introduction and publication of such pestiferous errors.

Each of the above resolutions gave rise to much discussion. They were all carried, however, by a large majority. The vote on the first stood, ayes 129, nays 79. The rest passed, we understand, by still greater majorities. It may be proper here to remark that we do not accede to the principle involved in the first resolution. It strikes at the unity of the church. It exhibits a church refusing to be in communion with itself! We cannot allow that a Presbytery has the right to review and set aside the decisions of a co-ordinate Presbytery. The peculiar circumstances, however, in which the orthodox in the Assembly have been placed for some years past, have led to the adoption of the said principle. But these very circumstances prove the *sin* of the orthodox. Had they been vigilant and faithful, no Presbytery could have arisen in their body that would have given clean papers to a person of avowed heterodox sentiment. And if any such Presbytery now exists, its overthrow could easily be accomplished without having recourse to an un-presbyterial principle. It may be interesting, however, to our readers, to give an extract of the argument on both sides of the question involved in the first resolution.

Mr. Leach said, "as to the constitutional question, why had it been brought before the last assembly? If the case was so very clear, why had it ever been brought up, and why was the assembly now memorialized to declare whether presbyteries might constitutionally examine persons applying to be received by them or not? This very fact showed that the thing was not so plainly to be seen in the constitution, for if it was, those gentlemen would not have failed to see it.

Mr. L. now invited attention to what the constitution did declare on the subject, and he commenced by quoting the following passage:

"The radical principles of presbyterian church government and discipline are, that the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of christ, called emphatically the church; that a larger part of the church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part and to all the parts united, that is, a majority shall govern.

Mr. L. expressed his hearty concurrence in these premises, and argued from them that the united church possessed an indisputable right to determine what were the qualifications for membership throughout the body. In confirmation of which he referred to the following passage in the constitution.

"Every christian church, or union or association of particular churches is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion and the qualifications of its ministers and members."

He also quoted the following passage:

"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word or beside it in matters of faith or worship."

On this latter clause he presumed the advocates of the resolution intended to hinge their argument. But he protested against giving it such a construction as should allow presbyteries to determine for themselves what should be the terms of communion within their own bounds; for that would be at once to declare that there was no uniform system of action or government in the Presbyterian church; that the church was not one; and that its government was not one. To illustrate his meaning, he supposed a case where one presbytery should require of members, not only an ordinarily good education, but that they should read German, and Sanscrit, and Chinese, and all the languages of the world. Would they not by that act put themselves, *quoad hoc*, out of the pale of the Presbyterian church. They would be no longer within one common bond of brotherhood, under one common constitutional principle, but would be in fact a different body altogether. The form of Government proceeded on the principle that the church as one body, had the right to determine what should be the qualifications of membership within her communion; and she had done it, by declaring that "Those who are to be admitted to sealing ordinances, shall be examined as to their knowledge and piety." This was carrying out the principle as first laid down. Here was a uniform rule applicable alike to every part of the church. Now suppose a session instead of this should admit applicants simply on the ground of a repetition of the Lord's prayer, the creed and the catechism, without requiring any evidence of a change of heart.—Would it do for that session to say that they being virtually a small presbytery had a right to judge of the qualifications of those who applied for membership? It would not; for though they were the judges, yet they were to judge according to the rule here laid down. They might examine, but they must examine on the principles of the constitution. They could make no new condition; and if they should do so, it would be a clear violation of the constitution and law of the church. And persons refused admission for such reasons would have a valid ground of appeal. Now, in like manner, the constitution said that the church as a body had the right to determine what should be the qualifications of its ministers; and it accordingly laid down in the 14th and 15th chapters of the Form of Church Government, what these qualifications should be. Mr. L. referred to these requirements and observed that they were to be uniform throughout the church and binding alike on every presbytery within her limits. The presbytery had no right to alter these terms. If it could add to them, it might also subtract from them; for the principle would work both ways. But to say that the presbytery had an inherent and independent right to say what should be the qualifications of its own members, was to throw the reins loose upon their neck, and leave them in this essential particular without government. The Assembly would censure any presbytery that should presume to change these terms; and it had done so in the case of the Cumberland Presbyterians, who for refusing to require of their candidates all that the Form of Government laid down, had been justly separated from the body. Now suppose a presbytery should go into the opposite extreme, and should very largely add to these qualifications. Suppose it to be a large and influential presbytery with a great number of young men under its care. If these young men were penned up for ten years to—

gether, studying what would be of no use to them in their ministry, would they not have a right to complain? to appeal? and would not the Assembly sanction their appeal? Surely it would. The rule of qualification in one presbytery was the rule of qualification in all other presbyteries. If it was laid down for one, it was laid down for all. If the rule was to be changed, let the constitution be changed.

But it was contended that, though this right was inherent in presbyteries, yet it need not in all cases be exercised. And when was it to be exercised? When the presbytery had good reason to suspect that the applicant ought not to be received. And what was this good reason? The minister came well accredited. He brought with him the assurance of the presbytery he had left, that he was a good and true man, and properly qualified to exercise his ministry. Still the presbytery suspect him. Well; if they had good reason to suspect, then they had good reason to inform the presbytery which dismissed the man of the ground of that suspicion; for he was still amenable to the presbytery from whence he came, and not to that presbytery into which he sought admission; and if they neglected to do this, they were recreant to their duty, both to the man and to the other presbytery. Mr. L. went entirely with the principles of the report that where there was good reason to suspect a man of unsoundness in the faith, or an immoral life he ought not to be received. But yet it was maintained that the presbytery might examine him.

Dr. MILLER here corrected Mr. L. as to the phraseology of the report; it did not speak of having "good reason to suspect," but of a case where there was "any reasonable doubt."

Mr. L. said there should be no unreasonable doubt: for if doubt was unreasonable, it was unchristian; if it was reasonable, then the presbytery ought to take the constitutional steps to have it resolved. For a judicatory who had nothing to do with a man, not a particle of power over him, to undertake to try a man who was amenable to a different tribunal! was this Presbyterianism? No: it was a new fangled thing, to which it was now sought to give currency in place of the good old well known thing called Presbyterianism, and which he rejoiced to see in the Assembly's book as he saw it in the Bible.

But suppose the man submitted to be examined; what was the language of such an act on the part of the presbytery? was it not this? "It is true that we have examined your papers, and that they declare you to be in good and regular standing and commend you to our reception; but we, have much doubt whether that presbytery, though they ordained you, and though you have been laboring for years within their bounds, have the capacity to judge of you: for we are far more orthodox, or more holy, or more refined and intellectual than they. There is some thing about us which renders it quite doubtful, though you might be worthy enough of them, whether you are worthy of us." And was this the way to draw the bonds of brotherly love? Gentlemen talked of confidence in each other: but did not this very proposal prove that there was no such thing? and that they insisted on being beyond the control of the judgment of co-ordinate presbyteries? Though the constitution had declared that the judgment of one church court was to be respected as valid in all other church courts, yet it was now for some reason—what reason he knew not, sought to set this principle wholly aside, to set ourselves up as independent presbyteries, to resolve ourselves into a congregational organization and to trample the doctrine and government of the Presbyterian church under foot. He asked whether a man was ordained to be a minister only within the bounds of one presbytery? or for the whole church? and whether if a man was qualified constitutionally for the bounds of one presbytery, he was not equally for all presbyteries? If a man brought the proof that he had been duly ordained in one presbytery, was another presbytery to re-judge its judgment? It was a farce: a solemn presbyterial farce!

Dr. HOGG now rose and observed, that when a great question of Ecclesiastical polity was under consideration, and especially if it involved constitutional principles, it was the imperious duty of the Assembly to look carefully, thoroughly and impartially, first at its nature, secondly at its direct and acknowledged tendencies, and thirdly at the evil that might grow out of it. Dr. H. had endeavored thus to examine the question now under discussion. He did not complain of the manner in which the opponents of the resolution had presented their argument nor should he waste the time of the Assembly in wandering after them in their wanderings, and in introducing a thousand irrelevant topics suggested by the fruitful imagination of men strong in mind, strong in feeling, and bent upon their purpose.

He would first inquire what was the true nature of this question? What was the character of the proposed resolution as constituting a part of an important report on which the committee had labored with no small diligence? He believed what he said when he declared that upon the manner in which the assembly should act on this resolution, would depend, in a great degree, the future destinies of the Presbyterian church. Yes, he believed it. On this very report the Assembly was to decide whether they would continue one church, or be rent in pieces and scattered to the winds of heaven.

The principle expressed in this resolution was the great conservative principle of Presbyterianism, and it was on this ground only that Dr. H. had assented to it. And why was it thus to be considered? For various reasons, but especially for this—that it left to every member of Presbytery and of the church the right of resorting to first principles, not only those of our ecclesiastical constitution, but to the principles of integrity and truth, to which the final resort must be ever made.

The gentleman who had spoken had entirely mistaken the ground which the friends of the resolution assumed, as to what these friends considered the strong point of the defence and safety of the church. The brethren seemed to take it for granted that the advocates of the resolution meant to say that the self-preserving power of the Presbytery was derived from the constitution of the church. It was not so. Dr. H. affirmed that this conservative power stood by itself; that it existed far back of any conventional agreement; that it belonged to that self-preservation which was inherent in every individual, in every corporate-body of a civil kind, and in every judicatory of Jesus Christ, unless such individual or such body had parted with this power by its own act. Would any man rise in his place and say that this principle was a false one?—Would any man have the hardihood to deny that it was the right of every individual and of every collective body to exercise a conservative power over its own existence? And did not this right remain until parted with by actual compact? When a number of individuals associated together, expediency and even necessity required that they should surrender some of their rights for the common benefit, and the better to secure the residue. So far as they made this actual surrender, so far they were bound by it; but so far as they did not make such a surrender, the common sense of every man would declare that all their original rights were inherent still. They never would be parted with but by actual compact. Apply these principles to a Presbytery. A Presbytery was a corporate body, but not, as was often said of civil corporations, a body that had no soul. It had a soul, and must act as a moral and accountable agent; and if this was its character, had it not a right to preserve its own principles?—its own rules?—its own ends of action, and its own modes of ascertaining those ends? Certainly it had, unless it was bound to surrender them by a compact which either took away its original rights, or limited their exercise. And Dr. H. therefore affirmed that the declaration of the resolution proposed for adoption, was but a simple affirmation of an original and inherent right. He should not stay to prove that this was the character of the resolution, but would only strengthen the position he had assumed by one remark, in the truth of which he felt full confidence. If he understood the nature of Presbyterianism, the true fountain of all ecclesiastical power was the Presbytery.—This body acted on the one hand upon churches and congregations, exercising over them a control which was not against their own consent, and which did not bring them into bondage, but which was for their preservation and benefit. On the other hand, it reached up its power to the Synod and the General Assembly, to the Synod, by itself constituting a part of the Synod; and to the Assembly, by representation. This was the position occupied by the Presbytery in the general system; and here all the reserved and inherent powers belonging to the system were found remaining, among which surely the right of preserving its own character must be one.

2d. Whether these reasons were admitted in all their extent or not, still if it was admitted that the Presbytery had original right and might exercise, unless it was actually conceded by compact, then the inquiry presented itself, does the constitution of the Presbyterian church deprive Presbyteries of this right in any degree? Does the constitution inhibit its exercise? To this inquiry, the answer was plain. There was no express resignation of the power, nor any explicit inhibition of its exercise. It was an argument by induction, from particular clauses that constituted a whole body of artillery which had been brought to bear against the resolution. But the guns aimed too low, and did not reach the position which they were meant to assail.

To advert to the argument which had been drawn from the constitution, a brief examination would clearly show that the brethren had taken wrong positions, and had a wrong view of the whole case. The brother (Mr. Leach) had set out with a distinct reference to a clause in the constitution which laid down the radical principles of Presbyterianism. These were all true and good and wholesome principles; and if prayers and ardent wishes were sufficient to produce such a result, Dr. H. felt as though he could pray day and night to the God of influences, that these should be in fact, as they were in theory, the principles of the Presbyterian church, and might be inculcated upon every member and upon every child of that church from its infancy. But was it possible, in thus affirming the unity of the church, to slide into a dogma which went to establish a spiritual despotism, and that of the worst form—the uncontrollable despotism of the many over the rights of a part? Because the Presbyteries had conceded some of their natural rights, was it therefore true that they had parted with all?—that their rights and powers were clean gone?—that the rights of minorities were no more to be regarded? Was the Presbyterian body so completely consolidated that the voice

of one of its parts must be, *de facto*, the voice of all other parts?—so that if one part of the body should perform an act or speak a word, that all other parts must be concluded by this one, and must be liable to the action of that wrong, if wrong were done? Was the union of church to be converted into a bond of slavery?—so that if one Presbytery should send forth ten or twenty or a hundred men, inimical to Presbyterianism, and even to Christianity, with a certificate under its hand, every other Presbytery throughout the body must receive these as good men and true? If this was the essential principle of Presbyterianism, he should wash his hands of it, and declare himself an Independent on principle.

Report on Popery.

Mr. Breckenridge, of the committee to whom was re-committed the Report on Overture No. 10, from the Presbytery of Baltimore, on the subject of Popery, reported as follows:

The committee to whom was referred the Overture (No. 10) from the Presbytery of Baltimore, on the subject of Popery, beg leave respectfully to recommend to this body the adoption of the following resolutions, viz:

1. Resolved, That in the judgment of this Assembly, according to the declaration of our excellent standards, chap. xxv. sec. 6, "the pope of Rome is that Anti-Christ, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God," as predicted and defined in the word of God, (2 Thess. 2d chap. and elsewhere.) That the communion self-styled "The Holy Catholic church," is not the church of Christ, or a church of Christ, but is apostate from God, fallen by unbelief, and cast off from the church of Christ; and therefore that her ordinances, acts and administrations are not to be recognized as valid, and that this is more especially true in regard to her professed sacraments, of baptism and the eucharist—inasmuch as by various profane exorcisms, idolatrous incantations, and unauthorised additions, mutilations and ceremonies, these simple sacraments have wholly lost their original character and true design; and moreover, that the prevalence of popery is esteemed by this Assembly destructive of the souls of men.

2. Resolved, That while the prophecies of God's word, the history of popery, and the spirit of the age give cheering and abundant evidence that this enormous organization is speedily to be dissolved, its power to be broken, and its influence to cease, yet owing to the peculiar position of our beloved country, in regard to papal Europe, and to the immense emigration of Roman Catholic population, and especially of Jesuit priests from foreign lands, it is believed that our religious institutions are exposed to imminent peril, without the united efforts of the people of God; and therefore we are loudly called on, as American citizens and Protestant Christians, to use all wise and Christian means consistent with the religious rights of our fellow men, to arrest so insidious, alarming and ever-growing an evil: especially do we recommend the withdrawal of all youth from under the care of Jesuit priests and papal nuns—to provide schools adequate to the education of our youth, especially of our female children—to diffuse light in the spirit of love by the press and the pulpit, and to seek, by intercession with God, and by all moral influences within our reach, alike to save our country from the destructive influence of popery, and to rescue the unhappy votaries of the pope from the delusion by which they are misled and destroyed.

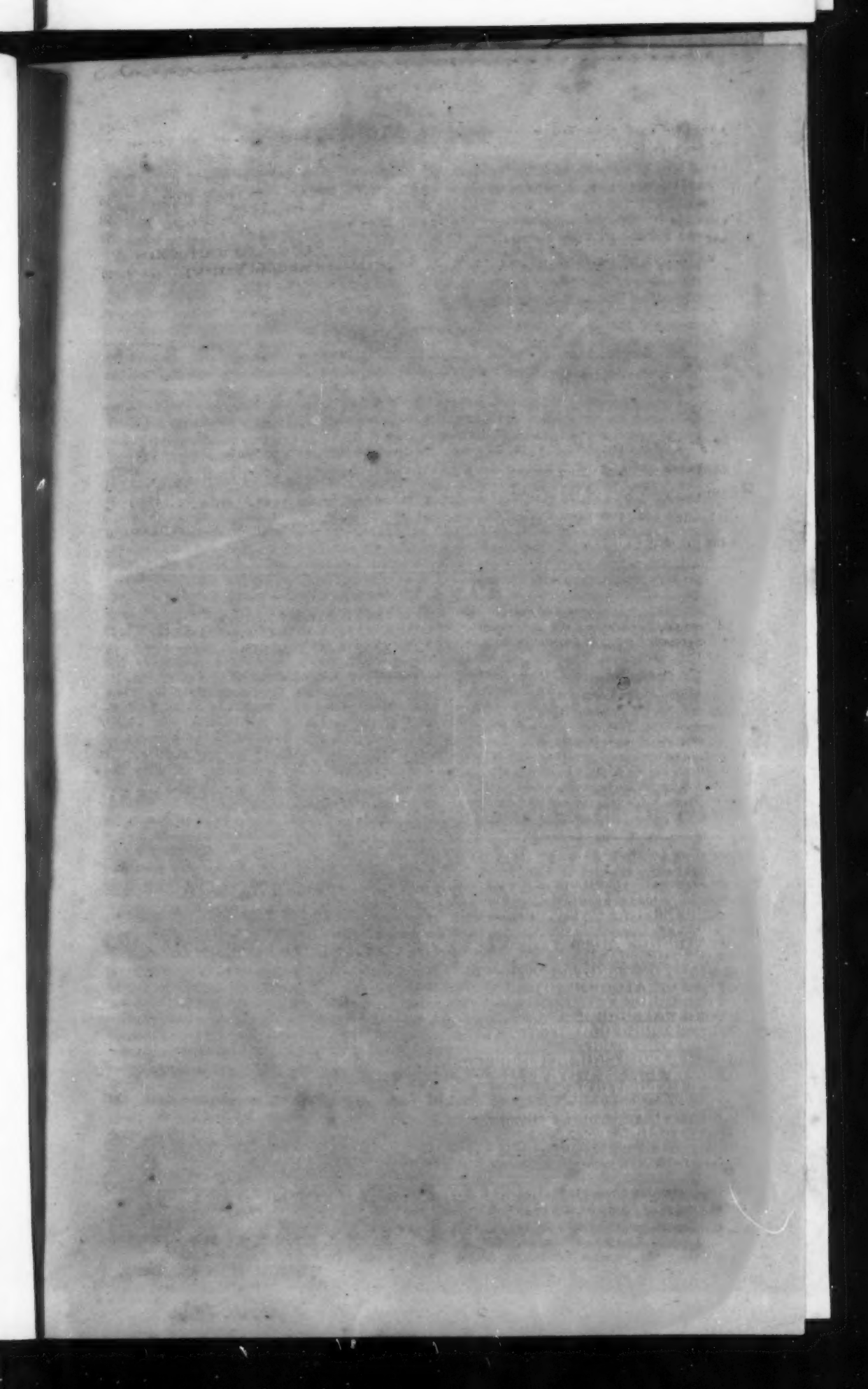
3. Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all our Theological Seminaries, to train candidates for the sacred office with adequate instructions on the great questions involved in the papal controversy—so that they may be fully qualified to meet and discomfit the priesthood of Rome.

Report of the Board of Managers of the Theological Seminary.

The following Report should have appeared at an earlier date, but was inadvertently omitted:

At a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Theological Seminary, on the 25th March, 1835, at the Hall, the following students were appointed to be taken on trials for license, viz: Mr. James Dixon, by the Presbytery of Muskingum; Messrs. Wm. Galbraith, George M. Hall and David Strang, by the Presbytery of Chartiers. In the event of their licensure, the following scale of appointments was adopted, viz: Mr. Dixon, in the Presbytery of Muskingum, August and September; Mr. Galbraith, Allegheny, August—Philadelphia, September; Mr. Hall, Philadelphia, August, September; Mr. Strang, Chartiers, August, September. By order of the Board.

THOS. HANNA, Sec'y.



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The Reasons of Protest against the deed of Synod, acknowledging the Original Seceders to be in communion with us, and the Answers to those Reasons, by a Committee of Synod, of which 1000 copies were published, have been all sold. This notice is given for the information of such as have ordered copies, which have not been forwarded to them.

AGENTS.

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January 1, 1835.

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